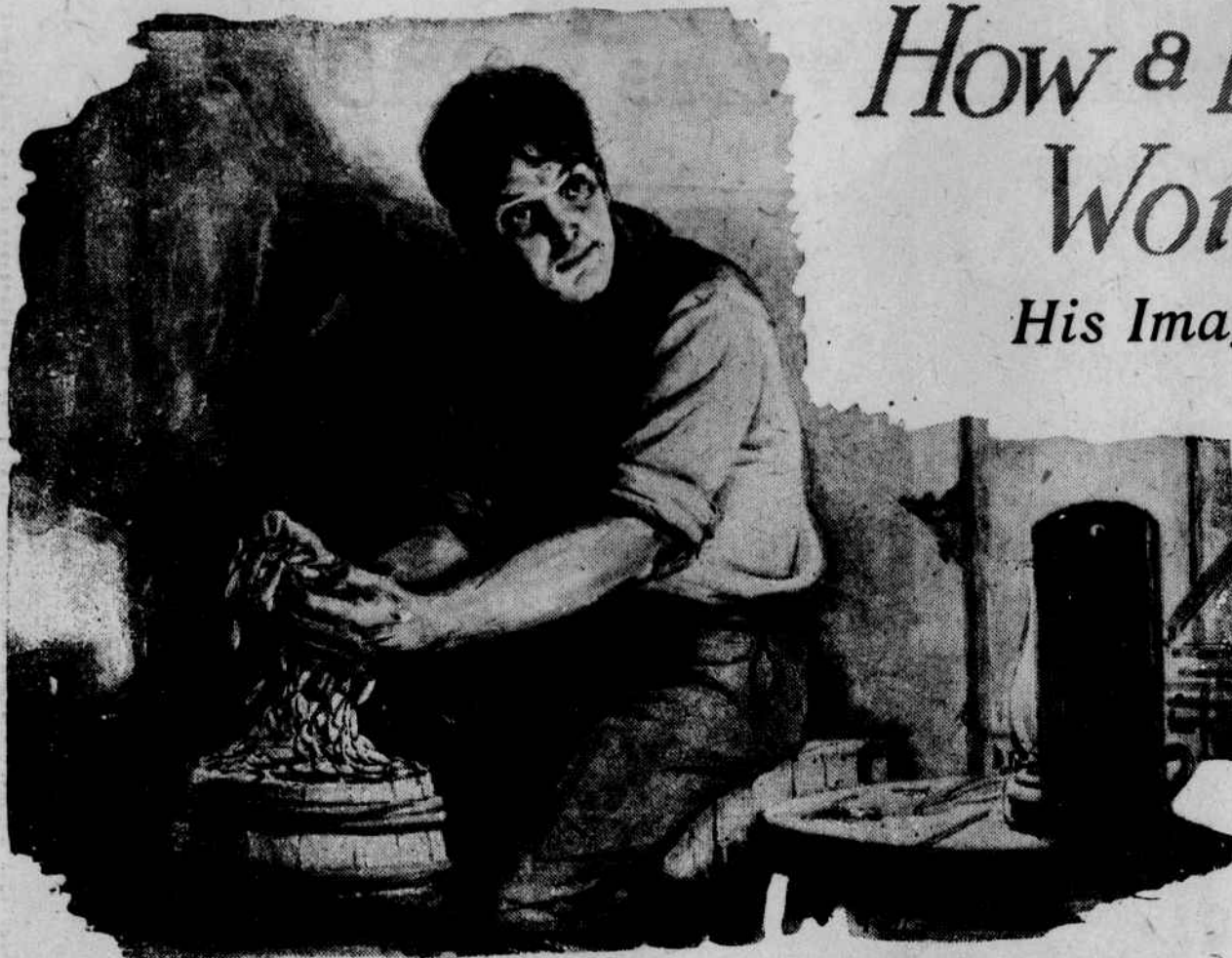


# How a Dreamer's Real Coins Worried Us - Chief Flynn

His Imagination Led Herman Heinze to Make Half Dollars from Mexican Silver Dollars in Order to Finance His Invention of a Helicopter—Hard Chase by Government Agents Finally Wound Up In His Capture in the Ramapo Hills.



"We had come as softly and as quietly as possible. The stranger was too absorbed to notice small noises. . . . Once he flipped one of the coins into the air and executed a little dance. It was, of course,

Herman Heinze. "Why did I counterfeit? There is no mystery about that. I needed money."

By WILLIAM J. FLYNN.

Former Chief of the United States Secret Service.

## CASE V.

HERE is a meager possibility that one of these nights the Metropolitan Opera Company will produce an opera unlike anything it has ever sung. I say that the possibility is a meager one, but I've come across such amazing things while hunting crooks that I'm prepared for the shock, no matter whence it comes. I can see the announcements of the new opera—the "Fall of Jericho" or "Daniel and the Lions"—score and libretto by none other than Herman Heinze. Four or five acts of it, with lots of tenors and magnificent orchestral effects. Probably Herman would have a band in the pit instead of an orchestra. It is not improbable that Herman would sing all the parts himself. Herman would try anything any number of times if not restrained.

Wonder what has become of Herman since he left Sing Sing? We had a fearful time getting him in there.

Possibly it will not be an opera that will announce Herman Heinze's return. It may be a portable bridge made of aluminum and long enough and strong enough to take all the traffic that crosses the East River. Herman was rather keen about portable bridges. As I recall it he had a bridge that would even span the Hudson. This bridge could be moved up and down the river to suit traffic. If there was great call for it at Fourteenth street at noon, let's say, it would simply move to Fourteenth street and mechanically extend itself or shorten itself to span the river at that point. At 2 o'clock the traffic at Chambers street might be enormous. Simple. Merely pull a lever and throw in a switch or so and the Heinze bridge would plow down to Chambers street and connect the two shores.

Heinze, Poet, Thinker, &c.

## And His Portable Bridge

Herman was a thinker, a poet, a romanticist. It was too much, all this, for one man. It got him into no end of trouble.

It was Herman's airship that fetched his downfall. The opera and the bridge, as much as he cherished them as dreams, could wait. After all, there was a limited audience for opera; and a bridge, by the same token, was a bridge—a common enough thing. Later on there would be time for bridges. Let the world struggle along with its clumsy steel spans. Good enough for it, at that.

It is true that Herman tried to sell his opera, but the music loving public was at that time balking at the ultra-modern school. Strauss was yet to come, but folks were preparing for him. One thing at a time. The public would never stand for Strauss and Heinze simultaneously. Fancy the first singing of "Elektra" with the "Fall of Jericho" being produced in a neighboring theater at the same hour, and New York's police force numbering only 10,000, as it did at the time.

So the world has never heard Herman Heinze orchestrated and warbled. It may be Herman Heinze's patent airship on which he will ride to fame once more. As I have said, it was this very airship that accomplished his ultimate collapse. Somewhere in the archives of the Treasury Department they may have the plans of Heinze's Homemade Helicopter. He told us it antedated Orville Wright's by ten years and that the only reason monuments were not being erected to him in

stead of Mr. Wright was that Mr. Wright was a business man who knew how to induce capital to finance him, whereas he, Herman Heinze, was an artist miserably futile at commerce.

It is fair enough to say that whatever else Heinze's flying machine lacked, it was guiltless of lack of originality. Nothing quite like it has been seen. I never saw it fly, inasmuch as my acquaintance with it was limited to the plans and its picture, drawn, of course, by its inventor.

As far as I was able to discern it performed on the principle of all helicopters—a flying machine sustained and propelled by one or more air screws on vertical axes. Herman's had four screws. The pilot sat on a high seat manipulating two levers. There was nothing of the machine over his head. There was nothing immediately in front of him, nor in back of him, nor on either side of him. It was as though he was sitting on top of a flagpole viewing grandeur. All the driving and sustaining apparatus was beneath him.

The picture suggested a blithe, bewhiskered citizen riding through space on a collection of furnace pipe. A male Valkyr taking in the clouds on a bunch of oversize stovepipe.

Do not misunderstand me. Herman was no nut. He had a little too much imagination, perhaps, and it is likely his fancies governed him. But there was no crack in his brain that shouldn't have been there. He was as sane as a bookkeeper.

However, his flying machine failed of success like his opera and his aluminum portable bridge. He failed to interest moneyed folk and therefore lacked the money to build the machine shop and hangars necessary to the building and experimenting. As you will see in a moment, Herman lacked nothing but money.

Later on he told us that had his opera not been a decade or so ahead of its time it would have made much money for him and he would have been a highly respected composer, excused for personal and minor infractions of the law on the grounds of temperament. In other words, had he gained the appreciation due him all would have been well and Sing Sing would never have known him. The same reasoning he applied to his bridge.

As for the idol of his brain, his flying machine, had he been able to build that and hand it to the waiting world his pillows would have been money bags and his name a synonym for genius and benefactor.

Thus made wealthy he would devote himself to the production of opera. What Beecham's Pills had done for music in London, Heinze's Helicopter—Heinze's Homemade Helicopter—would do for New York. And New York deserved it so little.

It was, therefore, crass stupidity on the part of the world that drove him to the hunted life of the counterfeiter and the counterfeiter's inevitable end. They never got away with it. And just to moralize a bit, permit me to give a bit of gratuitous advice to any ambitious young men who contemplate counterfeiting currency.

Simply don't. The chances are that you are no cleverer than the most original and astute of your predecessors. They couldn't quite make the grade. You can't either. Stick to the old humdrum job. It pays in the long run. And all the romantic things you've heard about jail have emanated from the minds of writers. You'll find no romance inside prison. That, my friend, is as certain as it is that you'll fetch up in prison if you persist in your determination to bust the rules and regulations.

## Something Wrong With the Coin, But What Was It?

It was along about September, 1906, that we received word that the Pacific coast was being showered by half dollars that never saw a United States mint. Agent Burke went out to make preliminary investigation. He came back with a very remarkable reproduction of a fifty cent silver coin. Its weight was correct. The silver was genuine. As bullion it was worth as much as the legitimate coin. If you looked at it casually or even carefully, if you were not on your guard or were not more on less of an expert in such matters, you would pronounce it perfectly good. It had the ring, the sharpness of milling and stamping—in fact, everything.

I say everything. That's somewhat too broad a statement. If you were to take a glass and scrutinize the lettering you would become impressed with the fact that there was something queer about it—the lettering I mean. You would be justified in concluding that some other lettering had been on that coin or that something had been all but obliterated. And quite right, too.

We looked at that coin until our eyes began playing tricks upon us. We took it to banks and to collectors of coins. We had it inspected by men whom the Treasury Department employs to solve queer riddles such as this one was. They said the same thing we had; that there was something wrong about the coin.

With the coin in our hands we went to San Francisco. Much time was wasted thereby. We not only learned nothing except that the supply of the coins had ceased. The coins had passed out of general circulation, but we were entirely in the dark concerning the manufacturer thereof.

It does not seem to me to come amiss to

depart from my narrative here for a few months to talk frankly about the ordinary methods of a detective. There is very little of the bizarre about his work. Deduction is as often misleading as it is productive of results. You know your field. You are supposed to know the history of crimes similar to the one on which you are operating. If it is a counterfeiting case you look up the oldtimers who happen to be out of prison. Having accounted for them and learned that none of them is guilty, you naturally come to the conclusion that you are dealing with a newcomer.

You look and listen and wait. You run out all leads and tips. Maybe you strike the right one; maybe you don't. In the great majority of cases persistency wins rather than inspiration. Sooner or later you stumble over your man or some one tells you something that leads you to the capture. There's not much more romance in crime for the detective than there is for the crook. It's the reader who reaps the romance and, to be wholly candid, it is generally the writer who provides it.

We hung around the Pacific coast for a month or so. As I have indicated, all the information we amassed might have been written on the back of a postage stamp. Possibly we would have stayed longer had not we received word that the same queer half dollars were appearing in New York and Boston. Our unidentified friend was leading us back and forth across the continent.

He was not inundating the East with the coins, but every day or so we would be called upon by some bank and handed a few more of them. I won't tire you with the routine of that search for this newcomer. There was much scampering up and down the coast and a thousand and one theories and tips—all of the latter quite false. We accounted for all known counterfeiters. Some were in jail and the others were able to produce a clean bill of health.

Every so often the detective business reaches a pass where you decide to grab your hat and coat, tell the boss to do his own detecting and then go out and get a job where your work lies on the desk in front of you and not in the clouds above you. You are saved by two things; you know that police work is the only thing you know how to do and, secondly, that sooner or later you are going to land your criminal.

Assay offices, where silver bullion was sold, were able to account for all the metal they had received and disposed of. None had gone into illegitimate use. Dealers in old gold and silver presented a harder proposition. They couldn't account for all the silver they had sold, but, on the other hand, they had sold very little coin silver. No, the silver this man was using had come from another source.

We sort of shoved the case aside. Other and more pressing business had come to us. We kept watch, of course, and maintained a few men on the case. But the coinage seemed to have fallen off. Fewer of the spurious half dollars were appearing. Very well, we'd wait. Sooner or later, you know; sooner or later.

One day early in June, 1907, a man who lived in Suffern, N. Y., telephoned us to the effect that there had been a sudden gush of imitation half dollars up his way. He was a grocer and, according to his telephone conversation, had received five or six of these bad coins.

"How do you know they're bad?" we asked him.

"Well," he replied, "I'm not altogether certain they are. There's something queer about them. Don't know just what it is. They ring all right and look as good as

most half dollars, but over at the bank they say there's something queer about 'em. I just thought you'd like to know."

We went to Suffern and there collected about fifty of the same sort of spurious coins we had seen on the Pacific coast. Moreover, they were the same as we had picked up in Boston and New York. One shopkeeper told us he had received one of them from a giant whose most distinctive feature was an enormous beard—a black beard almost as wide as his shoulders and reaching half way to his waist.

## The False Coin Turns Up In Small New Jersey Town

A druggist told us he had received one from a tall, thin man, with no whiskers, but the bushiest eyebrows he had ever seen. You'd know those eyebrows anywhere. There never were such eyebrows. Sort of made you want to shake 'em and watch the rabbits run out.

A trolley car conductor remembered the man well. He was a medium sized man in corduroys—sort of stooped and a shuffle in his walk. Presently we began to suspect all the freaks who ever traveled with circuses were out circulating the stuff. One farmer had sold a dog to the man and the purchaser of that hound had paid the farmer two dollars—all in counterfeit half dollars. We took heart when we heard that, for we suspected that the dog would appear and by shadowing the dog we might find his new owner. Shadow a dog? Believe me, a desperate detective will shadow a canary bird if he thinks it will get him anywhere.

But the man who purchased the farmer's dog was a little man, with a whining voice and a luxuriant mustache! And all this up in Suffern and thereabout. We walked the streets of Suffern and climbed all the Ramapo hills. As it turned out we failed to climb the right one. But I'm coming to that.

Back to New York much chagrined! Here was a lad manufacturing money with in walking distance of our offices and all we knew about it was just that. There was nothing to do but stop, look and listen. And we proceeded to do much of each. In the end our ears were victorious.

From a man living at the foot of Ramapo Mountain, near Suffern, we received a telephone message telling us that the most mysterious of men was doing something or other on top of Ramapo. How did he know? Well, in the first place he had a habit of coming down at night and stealing steel rails from the railroad near by. Gangs had been working on the road replacing rails. The mysterious stranger had been observed but two nights before carting two lengths of discarded rail up the mountain.

Moreover, this farmer's son, being an adventurous youth, had gone over the mountain to see what he could see. He came across the mysterious stranger working at a forge.

"What's that?" the boy had demanded, indicating the forge.

"That, my son," replied the man, "is an insect exterminator. I am a forester sent down by the State to kill the bugs that are killing the trees."

"How do you kill the bugs?" persisted the youth. "Burn them?"

"No, the fumes kill them. Isn't that a good idea?"

The boy told his father that the stranger was a tall man with a kind face and a tremendous interest in his work. While the boy questioned him he kept on blowing his forge. He made no attempt to shoo the boy off. It was all right; no secret; nothing to hide.

The boy led us to the forge. It wasn't

working, but the mysterious man was. He was at work on a drop hammer press of simple and effective design. He had erected a framework of logs. Like the runners of an elevator car he had bolted the stolen rails to either side of the framework. On a concrete base at the bottom of the structure he had placed a steel plate, perhaps an inch thick. At the top of the framework and connected with the rails by common iron shoes was a 100 pound weight, suspended by a rope that ran over a pulley and fastened to a trigger, which, if pulled, released the rope and weight, which then descended to the steel base plate with a tremendous thump. Sort of a guillotine arrangement. Understand?

We had come as softly and as quietly as possible. The stranger was too absorbed in his work to notice small noises. At regular intervals the weight, fell—whang! And each time he'd raise the weight and pick from the base plate something that gave him great pleasure. Once he flipped one of these things into the air and executed a little dance. Naturally we saw that the flipped object was a coin.

It was, of course, Herman Heinze. I never knew a man to be so chagrined by arrest. He was quite philosophical about it after we assured him that he might just as well take his medicine like a sport. He felt somewhat relieved when we told him how he had eluded us and how it was the farmer's boy who did it and not us.

"Well, if there's any reward," sighed Herman, "I hope they give it to that boy. He was a nice intelligent kid."

Herman had been stamping out half dollars all day and had a nail keg full. He took us to New York and down into West Twenty-third street. The house was directly opposite Proctor's old theater. I have forgotten the address—not that it really matters after all. But in this house he had got together a machine shop for making dies. He made his dies there and, so far as we were able to see, he made nothing but half dollar dies. I believe he had experimented with dollar dies, but for certain reasons had decided to stick to the halves.

## Plan Was to Buy Up and Mint Mexican Dollars

You see, Herman did not go to the assay offices for his silver. There was too much of a risk there. No, every so often he'd make a trip to the Mexican border and there purchase Mexican dollars for forty-four cents or so—purchase them from mysterious folks who had no right to have them. He paid bullion rates for the stuff, although the Mexican dollar contained the same amount of silver as the American, and the same grade, too. So far as bullion went, the Mexican dollar was quite as good as ours.

He'd place his Mexican dollars between steel rolls and these rolls would flatten out the coin until Herman had the material for two half dollars. To get this expanse of material he had to make it a trifle thin. The silver discs he obtained were just about one-one hundred and twenty-eighth of an inch less in thickness than our legitimate half dollar. He might have got away with that until the well known crack of doom, however, for old coins loose that much bulk in circulation in time.

But it happens that the Mexicans stamp their money deep. They have to. Give an enterprising Mexican who lacks wholehearted respect for his Government half a chance and he'll counterfeit anything from postage stamps to pardons. The Mexican stamping was so deep that there still were traces of the lettering after Heinze had rolled the dollar out. And even his neat stamp mill or drop hammer press failed to quite obliterate the Mexican lettering.

And it was that mere suggestion of the old Mex lettering that gave the otherwise pure looking coins their suspicious appearance. It was that queer look that nobody had been able to analyze that made us hurry to the Pacific coast. It was the deep stamping of the jealous Mexican Government that ruined Herman Heinze's plans to give the world his homemade helicopter.

"Why did I counterfeit?" He repeated our question. "There is no mystery about that. I needed money. Without money there could be no helicopter. I needed money in a hurry and decided to make my own."

"And where were you turning out the stuff on the Pacific coast, Heinze?"

"On the sublimest ledge on the top of Mount Tamalpais in San Francisco Bay. There I could work as an artist should work. I could turn and behold the city and watch it groan beneath its burdens. Turn again and behold the Golden Gate and the great Pacific beyond. One worked well in such a setting. Could one help it?" "Probably not, Herman; probably not."

# How Deserts Hold Plenty of Water

ONE region of the Colorado Desert, where the escape of the Colorado River has more than once caused serious trouble, has been made fertile, the underground water being utilized for irrigating several thousand acres.

Among the products which are making this reclaimed land rich are melons, barley, alfalfa, oranges, grapes, sweet potatoes, sugar beets and dates. On the agricultural experiment farm at Mecca in this region are to be found rare varieties of dates, which for a long time were produced only in Arabia and the oases of northern Africa, but which are now successfully grown here.

It has been found by Government experts that the fertility of soils depends largely on their capacity for retaining moisture. In many Western localities crops grow luxuriantly with scarcely any summer rain. It is even thought to be possible that the perma-

nent water supply existing at a depth of from forty to one hundred feet may be responsible for the ever present moisture.

ONE of the oddest domiciles on earth is that erected at Yokohama by a noted Japanese bacteriologist. It may be described as a dustproof, airproof, germproof building of glass, which stands on the open, unshaded grounds of the hospital of Yokohama.

The house is forty-four feet long, twenty-three feet wide and seventeen feet high. Large panes of glass, one-half inch thick and about four inches apart, are set in iron frames so as to form the sides of a cellular building block. Of these blocks the walls are constructed.

There are no window sashes, the air escape being through several small openings around the upper part of the second story,

but through which no air from the outside is admitted.

The air supply is obtained from a considerable distance, forced through a pipe and carefully filtered through cotton wool to cleanse it of bacteria.

To insure further protection and sterilization, the air is driven against a glycerine-coated plate of glass, which captures all the germs the wool spares. The few germs brought into the house in the clothes of the visitors soon die in the warm sunlight with which the place is flooded.

The space between the glasses of the building blocks is filled with a solution of salts which absorbs the heat of the sun, so that the rooms of the house are much cooler than those protected by the thickest shades. In the evening the interior is heated by the salts radiating the heat they have absorbed during the day.

So effective is the system of regulating the temperature that a few hours of sun-

light, even in freezing weather, will render the house habitable. It is only when several cloudy days follow in succession that artificial heat is needed. Then it is supplied by pumping in hot air.

GROWING in the spray of the great Victoria Falls in South Africa a new gladiolus has been discovered and named the "Maid of the Mist." Four bulbs of this plant, sent to England, have been induced to sprout and bloom by virtue of constant spraying in a hothouse. There the interesting discovery was made that the petals of the flower are so arranged that they form a pent-house to protect the stamens and pistils from the unceasing downpour to which they would otherwise be subjected in the native haunts of the plant.